

**REMARKS**

By the present amendment, claims 1-19 have been amended and are the claims pending in the application.

**Claim rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a)**

Claims 1-12 and 16-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sills in view of Craig et al.. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite a personal watercraft having two compartments. The first compartment being defined between the hull and the deck of the personal watercraft. The second compartment being defined by the tunnel and the ride plate.

Neither Sills nor Craig et al. disclose a personal watercraft, but a power unit for installation on a conventional sport boat. Neither Craig nor Sills disclose a tunnel defined by the hull. Instead Sills discloses a simple aperture (26) in the keel of the boat which is covered by a carrier plate. Craig discloses a mounting opening (134) in the keel of the boat where an insert is installed. Sills teaches to house the power unit of the boat in a protective shroud (29) on deck of the sport boat, Craig does not disclose any details regarding the housing of the power unit at all. Therefore Sills and Craig et al. fail to disclose a first and a second compartment as claimed in present claim 1.

In fact Craig discloses a ride plate (52), this ride plate being intended to sandwich a portion of the hull of the boat between the ride plate and the gear housing flange (see Col. 6, lines 3-8). Clearly the ride plate as taught by Craig et al. is not mounted to the hull at the bottom of a tunnel defined by the hull as claimed in claim 1 of the present application.

As each and every feature of claim 1 is neither disclosed in one of the cited prior art documents nor in the combination of these two documents, these prior art documents can not render claim 1 of the present application obvious.

Claims 2-12 and 16-19 each depend from claim 1, and for at least this reason, as well as for the features recited therein, these claims are also not obvious over the combination of Sills and Craig et al.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of rejection is respectfully requested.

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Claim 13

Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sills in view of Craig et al. and further in view of Sonnleitner et al.. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Sonnleitner does neither disclose a tunnel defined by the hull nor a ride plate mounted to the hull at the bottom of the tunnel. Further Sonnleitner lacks the teaching of two compartments disposed in the personal watercraft. Apparently even a combination of Sills, Craig and Sonnleitner does not exhibit each and every feature of claim 1 of the present application and therefore can not establish *prima facie* obviousness.

Claim 13 depends from claim 1 and includes each and every limitation of claim 1, and for this reason as well as for the features recited therein, claim 13 is believed to be in proper condition for allowance.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the amendments and remarks indicated above, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the currently pending claims are allowable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in a better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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